

Amnesty for Iraqi Insurgents

At a

June 14, 2006 press briefing, Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki discussed the possibility of granting limited amnesty aimed at ending the Sunni insurgency and leading to a national reconciliation. His comments marked the first time that a Shiite leader has openly and publicly discussed pardoning members of the insurgency.

Details on the plan are extremely vague. However, based on comments reported in the media from the Prime Minister and his aides, it appears that the Iraqi government is considering granting amnesty to those "who weren't involved in the shedding of Iraqi blood," (Washington Post, June 15) One of the Prime Ministers top aides, Adnan Ali al-Kadhimi, was quoted by the Washington Post as saying that "there is a patriotic feeling among the Iraqi youth and the belief that those attacks [against US forces] are legitimate acts of resistance and defending their homeland. These people will be pardoned definitely, I believe," (WP, June 15)

Kadhimi has

since resigned from the Prime Ministers office, and the Prime Minister released a statement that "Mr. Adna Kadhimi doesn't represent the Iraqi government in this issue and Mr. Kadhimi is not an advisor or spokesman for the prime minister." Kadhimi, however, stands by his comments and maintains that "the prime minister himself has said that he is ready to give amnesty to the so-called resistance, provided they have not been involved in killing Iraqis," (WP, June 16)

On June 25, Prime Minister Maliki unveiled his government's 24 point plan for national

reconciliation. While lacking key details and specifics, s expected the plan included language that leaves the door open to providing amnesty to Iraqi insurgents who have participated in attacks on our troops and citizens. However, on June 27 Prime Minister Maliki held a meeting with western reporters in which he stated that "there will be no amnesty for those who have killed Americans," (New York Times, 6/27/06). While this clear statement on the issue is certainly a welcome indication of the Prime Minister's position, it is important to recognize that he will still be involved in wider negotiations with members of the Iraqi National Assembly and other organizations in crafting a final reconciliation plan.

As the Iraqi Government moves forward with their reconciliation plan, it is vital that this Congress send a clear and unequivocal message that United States stands with the Prime Minister in opposing amnesty for those who have killed Americans. The men and women of our military have fought too hard and sacrificed too much to see those who are waging a deadly insurgent campaign against our forces in Iraq be given a blank slate in the form of amnesty.

In reaction to this situation, I have introduced H.J.Res.90 which states that it is the Policy of the United States that:

- the United States opposes efforts by the Government of Iraq to grant amnesty to persons known to have attacked, killed, or wounded members of the Armed Forces or other citizens of the United States; and
- that the President shall immediately notify the Government of Iraq that the Government of the United States strongly opposes granting amnesty to persons who have attacked members of the Armed Forces or other citizens of the United States.

Legislative Information

- Text
of H.J. Res. 90
- Cosponsors
of H.J. Res. 90

Correspondence

- 7/21/06
- Letter to Prime Minister Maliki before his visit to the United States
- 7/21/06
- Letter to President Bush encouraging his support for Prime Minister Maliki's opposition to insurgent amnesty
- 7/21/06
- Letter to Speaker Hastert and Majority Leader Boehner urging a vote on H.J. Res. 90 during Prime Minister Maliki's visit to the U.S.
- 6/26/06
- Letter to President Bush urging his opposition to amnesty for Iraqi insurgents who kill or wound Americans
- 6/26/06
- Letter to Speaker Hastert requesting a vote on H.J. Res. 90
- 6/26/06
- Letter to Majority Leader Boehner requesting a vote on H.J. Res. 90

On June 21, Congressman Larson and Congressman James Clyburn were joined by a number of colleagues to introduce a resolution declaring that the United States opposes efforts by the Government of Iraq to grant amnesty to persons known to have attacked, kidnapped, wounded, or killed members of the Armed Forces or American citizens. Speaking on behalf of the resolution were House Armed Services Committee Ranking Member Ike Skelton and Congressman Jack Murtha.